THE DAYSPRING.

"The dayspring from on high hath visited us."

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NEW-YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.

AT the beginning of the year, both old and young are apt to think of ways in which they can improve, and to resolve that they will make a great deal of improvement as the year passes. We suppose that many of the readers of "The Dayspring" have formed good resolutions for the present year, and we hope that they have succeeded in keeping them during these first few days. If they have failed to keep them, we would say: Do not be discouraged; but try again, and try harder than before.

We would urge all our readers to form good resolutions in regard to the Sunday school. Books, papers, and many other things, are bought for Sunday schools at great expense; ministers, superintendents, teachers, and others, give them a great deal of time and thought, and you have a chance to make yourselves wiser and better, and do much good to others, by your attendance there. Be sure then to form these four resolutions now at the beginning of the year: —

1. Resolve that you will go to Sunday school, if possible, every Sunday that it is in session. The first requisite for a good Sunday school is the regular attendance of all its members.

2. Resolve that you will be punctual at Sunday school. Do not go late once during the year. By being late you will help form a bad habit, you will lose some good that you ought to get, and you will annoy those who are punctual.

3. Resolve that you will learn every lesson as well as you can. Of all the lessons contained in the many different Sunday-school Lesson-papers and Question-books, there is hardly one that is not worth learning, and hardly one that would not be found interesting as well as instructive if only it were to be studied until well learned. Study your lessons until you know them, — usually it will not take long, — and you will be sure to get something from them.

4. Resolve that you will practise the moral and religious lessons that are taught. You will learn, or, at any rate, you will hear, a great many good things in Sunday school in the course of the year. If you will do your best to live in accordance with them, you will be a great deal better at the end of the year than you are at the beginning.

For The Dayspring.

LITTLE FRED.

I KNOW a roguish fellow, —
They call him "Little Fred," —
Brimfull of fun and mischief,
As soon as out of bed.

He climbs upon the sofa,
He hides behind the chair,
And, when you go to find him,
Behold! he isn't there.

He has a box of playthings
Well spread upon the floor;
His chubby fists are ready
To grasp a dozen more.

I could not count the tumbles
He gets, from day to day,
When he is chasing kitty,
Or when he is at play.

He tumbles from the cradle,
He tumbles on the floor,
And, when you try to catch him,
He tumbles all the more.

He's in all sorts of mischief, —
Creeps up and down the stair,
And opens every closet,
To find the goodies there.

For ever, ever, restless,
Save when he is in bed, —
May angels guard and keep him,
This precious little Fred!

AUNT CLARA.

NORTH ANDOVER, MASS.

Written for The Dayspring by the Ladies' Commission.

LETTERS ABOUT BOOKS.

V.

HILLSIDE, Dec. 14, 1878.

DEAR AUNT ANNIE, — Thanks for your last letter. Elsie and Robin are much set up at being "helped first;" and you rejoiced Elsie's heart by speaking of the "Watchwords," because her teacher has been using them with the class. All the books you name are not in our library, but there are enough to keep the young ones busy for some time.

As for what we would like next, I am sure we shall be glad of whatever comes. Perhaps it will be the boys' turn, and Ruth and I won't mind waiting; but, when you come to us, will you please give us something solid to begin with. Not that I don't like stories just as much as ever, and I hope you will tell us of some real nice ones soon; but, last week, when I spent a night with Ruth, and we talked over our plans for next year, we agreed that reading was one of our "opportunities," and we would try to get something more than amusement out of it. But we don't know just how to go to work. Won't you give us what help you can, and oblige your

HELEN.

VI.

BOSTON, Dec. 22, 1878.

MY DEAR HELEN, — I am glad that my last letter helped the little ones, and I hope you and your friend may carry out your purpose in your reading of next year.

And just here and now I should like to say to all you young people what I often long to say to individual boys and girls around me, — don't make the mistake of thinking that reading is necessarily in itself a good thing; that you are better employed over a book than playing with Rob or Elsie, dusting the sitting-room, or going up the hill to see the sunset.

I once knew a child who boasted that she always borrowed all the books of every new friend she made. Most of her time at home she spent with a book in her hand: she brought one to the table at meals; she lolled on the sofa with one before school, — I am not sure that she did not take one to bed with her, and read before she got up in the morning. She was too much occupied with reading to see any of the frequent chances for courtesy or attention to others; and, if she was asked to do a service, she moved to it unwillingly, often only half heeding, and came back to her book as soon as possible.

I do not know how many books she "got through" in a week, but if mention was made of any thing read a week or two before, she would probably say, "Oh, yes, that is the story where there was a shipwreck, or the people were lost somehow; or, no, it's the one where the girl was an orphan, and went West, or South, or somewhere, — isn't it?"

And I never saw proof that she had learned any thing, directly or indirectly, from her reading, though I did sometimes hear her say that a book was "elegant!"

You say this is an extreme case. I hope it is unusual, but it shows the temptations I want you to guard against. Let me beg you to remember that if a book makes you selfish, inattentive, or indolent, though it be full of the truest and noblest sentiments, — life even of saint or hero, — it is then and there bad for you. Reading is, as you say, one of the opportunities of life, which may be blessing or injury as you use it; and now more than ever you young people need to be careful of the habits you form in reading.

A generation ago, any boy or girl who

"took to books" necessarily did much of what you would call "solid" reading. After he had read and re-read the very small supply of books written specially for young people, the boy took up his father's books, and read history, biography, or essays, — not perhaps because he preferred such reading in the beginning, but because he could get nothing else. It was, perhaps, hard work, but it was good training; and those who went through it came out far better than the children who can now read for weeks and never get beyond the "half-grown novel," or the story of impossible adventure, and never care enough for any one book to look at it a second time. Of such, that may become true which was once said wittily of a lady: "She has ruined her mind by intemperate reading."

So I think there is great need for you young people to take yourselves in hand: to remember that there is such an evil as mental intemperance; that if you feed on even the best confectionery you will in the end ruin appetite and health; and that you must apply common sense and conscience to your reading as to your other occupations.

Keep, then, some proportion between your reading for amusement and your reading for improvement. A wise friend of mine said to her daughter, — a girl who like Nannie was ready "to devour any thing in the shape of a book," — "I don't call you 'fond of reading' while you read only story-books. That shows only that you are fond of entertainment. When you will read instructive books with pleasure, then I may think you fond of reading." Try, then, even if the biography or the essay seem at first somewhat dull, try to learn to like such reading. Be sure, at middle age, you will be glad of the habit; but it will not come of itself.

Then have some reason for reading any book. Let it be that you want the entertainment of a good story, — which, by the way, I hope you will always enjoy, — or that you want information on some special subject, or that you want to know the style or thought of a writer. And take breathing space to think over what you have read, and, if possible, talk it over with somebody. Besides preventing your reading becoming a purely selfish occupation, this will be great gain in making clear to you your own opinions, and in a family like yours you can give and take largely in this way.

For instance, perhaps none of you but Harry would care to read through now Dr. Kane's story; but if he will remember to tell you some of the most striking parts of it, and if you and Nannie will keep in mind his interest in Arctic travel, and note any thing relating to it that you come across in your reading, you will all gain thereby. And the same with Ben's study of "live things."

So, if you will talk over your story-books, finding out why you like the people, and how far you think them natural, even Rob and Elsie will find their books more interesting, and will get more good from them.

And I wish you might begin by thinking over and talking over this letter, which has grown so long that perhaps you may want to take breathing space here before going on to what I have to say to you and Ruth about special books.

The first book that occurs to me as likely to be of use to you is "Elements of Character," by Miss Chandler, now Mrs. Ware. I am quite sure you will find in it something to think about.

I remember that some of the girls I talk with here tell me that their friends who go to other Sunday schools, not Unitarian, ask them about their belief; and they

wish they understood it better themselves, and would like to know of some books not too big and old for them to get some ideas from.

We have one thin book that is about as good as it can be for such a purpose. It is Mr. Metcalf's "Letter and Spirit." The author says about it: "I call it the 'Letter,' because I think it is the literal meaning of what Jesus taught in his gospel eighteen centuries ago; and the 'Spirit,' because I think it is what the Spirit of God teaches, this very day, through the Spirit of man." Is not that good? And every thing in it is clear and simple, and yet so wise, that people of all ages like to read it if they want a book on such subjects.

Then there is "A Living Faith," written by a man who does not call himself a Unitarian, and who, as you will see in some places, thinks a little differently from your Sunday-school teacher or your minister. I cannot imagine anybody reading this not being better for it. It is very good for any one who wants to do as I know some young people do, — take up a book at the beginning of the year, in which they will read some every day and think about it, and so be sure of one little place on every day for the best things, which are apt to get crowded out by small things. Or it would be good to read and talk over with some older friend. I am sure you will like some chapters, — the one, for instance, on "Beginning a Christian Life," and those just after it.

Of course, I don't suppose that you girls will want all these books at once; but I hope you may like to keep these letters, and turn to them when you want to know what books to get for special subjects.

Let me say a word for some biographies, — the stories of real people, — which I like much. You have at home, I hope, the "Life of Mary L. Ware," and will get a great deal from that story of a very noble woman.

And I wonder if, when Nannie brought home "John Woolman's Journal," you happened to dip into it! Perhaps you will want to wait awhile for that; but put it on your list, and, if you do not already know Whittier's "Lines to ——, with a copy of 'John Woolman's Journal,'" pray look it up at once. You will find it on page 299 of volume I. of the blue and gold edition, with a motto from Charles Lamb, who was was also enthusiastic about this American Quaker, in his time but little known. He lived before our Revolution, but he saw so plainly what evils slavery must lead to in this country that he wrote about them in a way that reads almost like a prophecy of the things that have happened so long after, — even of the war in which your uncles fought. Parts of the book you would not care for; but I think you would like it much as a picture of early times in America, and still more as a picture of one of the best "Friends" that ever lived, and that is saying a great deal.

Another story of the same character, though of a totally different life in outward circumstance, is the "Life of John Coleridge Patterson," Missionary Bishop to some of the Polynesian Islands. He was a relative of Miss Yonge, some of whose stories you girls are sure to have read; and it gives a little touch of special interest to learn from a note that "those who liked the 'Heir of Redclyffe,' then first published, contributed toward the building of a vessel for his missionary work, and the proceeds of the 'Daisy Chain' paid for the buildings of his island college."

If these books seem rather fearful to you from their size, I am sure you will like two

in our Sunday schools, and I hope that by and by there will be as many *thousands*.

And now I wish to say a word about making returns of the collections. Our treasurer has a great many bills to pay for the support of our children and their Home at this season of the year, and he would be glad to hear from all who have any money for him. On the bottom of each box you will see directions how to open and take out its contents, and how to seal it up ready for use again. I think that, as soon as you have put in your New Year's offering, you had better open it and send the contents to Mr. H. Pickering, our treasurer, or to the office of the Mission. Then begin again, and collect what you can until about the middle of April, after you have put in your *Easter offering*, when you had better send again. This will reach our treasurer in season to enable him to print in his report, which he makes on the first day of May, the whole amount which you each have given during the year.

Now, dear little friend, that you may have a *Happy New Year*, and that it may be made the happier by what you have done or are intending to do for others, is the wish of your friend,

THE SUPERINTENDENT
of the Children's Mission.

"WHATSOEVER thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;" that is, do it *thoroughly*. Nothing must be slurred over, nothing left to chance. Your whole energy must be thrown into it; your thoughts must be given to it. Never let any work leave your hands till you can in truth say you have done your best, your *very best*.

WHENEVER you are angry, be assured that it is not only a present evil, but that you have increased a habit, and added fuel to the fire.

OUR PICTURES.

ON the first page is a picture of Mary Blanchard. She is a bright little girl, and as she looks us in the face, seems to say, "I wish you a Happy New Year." You see that she loves her kitten dearly, as almost all little girls do. It is a pretty sight to see Mary holding her kitten; but it is a prettier sight to see Susie Walton, in the picture on the opposite page, carrying a beautiful rose-bush to old Mrs. Swan, who is sick and poor. Her mother had been telling her that she ought not to think all the time of herself and her friends, but think sometimes of those who are in poverty and distress, and try to cheer and help them.

"Do you not think old Mrs. Swan would like a plant to put in her window?" said Susie to her mother

"I dare say she would," said her mother.

"Then I am going to buy one at the greenhouse and take it to her," said Susie.

So she took a bright half-dollar that had been given her to spend as she pleased, and went to the greenhouse near by, and bought the pretty rose-bush which you see her giving to this poor, sick woman.

We are sure that this kind deed will be a blessing both to Mrs. Swan and to Susie.

For The Dayspring.

THE BIRD'S NEST.

CHAPTER I.

BY MRS. ANNIE D. DARLING.

ARIETTA and Florence were two little cousins, who loved each other well enough to play together day after day, in pleasantness and peace.

In the grounds at "Hillside" was a small building that had once been used as a tool-house, but which Mr. Montford had given to his little daughter. It had been altered into a miniature cottage, with the appurtenances of a well-ordered home, on a small scale, to the children's great satisfaction; and there they passed many happy hours.

The house had four rooms: kitchen and dining-room on the first floor, parlor and chamber above. There was a nice sink in the kitchen, with spring water brought by Clapp from a never-failing supply at the barn, with a cunning little faucet, to be kept bright; where they could indulge the paddling propensities common to children and ducks, which they fully appreciated and enjoyed.

A stove was the one unattainable object of desire; but Mrs. Montford vetoed the proposition made by papa (after a long-whispered consultation with the small proprietors) so firmly, that Etta and Florence knew *that* must remain a thing to be longed for — a forbidden fruit — in their Eden. They were allowed to do some simple cooking, under the direction of Hannah the cook, over her fire in the great kitchen at the house, and to carry cooked food, for their own use, to the larder of their mansion. They had many a noon-day nap on the cunning little bed in the pretty blue chamber, and numberless tea-parties in the small dining-room. All through the long, bright, summer days, the little folks could be seen flitting about the rooms, on the piazza, or at work on the neat garden of the "Bird's Nest," — for so they named the pretty house; and their happy talk reminded one of the robins' chatter, as they busily kept house in the old elm drooping over the roof.

They learned to do many things that would be of use to them in after-life, in this pleasant house; and held their lease on condition that the place should be taken proper care of and neatly kept; and they thought too much of it not to try their best to fulfil all conditions.

One lovely day in July, the morning work all done, the little cousins went for a sail on the river, with Mr. Montford. Returning about four o'clock in the afternoon, with great bunches of pond-lilies, they ran to the "Nest" to put them in water, having left a goodly array of the creamy beauties for the mammas at the house, where Mrs. Cameron was spending the summer with her sister, Etta's mother.

Florence ran upstairs for a book she had left there; and Etta, busy over the lilies, below, was startled by hearing her exclaim, "Etta! come here; quick!"

Etta flew up the stairs, exclaiming, "What! what is it, Flo?"

"Come here," said Florence, meeting her at the top stair. "Hush! softly; look!" And, reaching the chamber door, she saw, extended on the bed, a child, of about three years, sound asleep!

"Why, where on earth did he come from, do you s'pose?" asked she. And Florence covered her mouth with her hands to keep in the little laugh that tried to get out in spite of her efforts; for it struck her as being very funny, that, as they were only

yesterday wishing that they had a "live doll" to play with, here was one all ready for them!

Creeping softly downstairs again, the little housekeepers took counsel together.

"Well," said Etta, her eyes like full moons, "if I ain't astonished! *That* wish came true pretty quick! Don't tell, Flo; but do you know, that's just what I wished yesterday, when we broke the 'merry-thought' of the chicken you dried? and if here it isn't come to pass!"

"Well, that's funny," said Flo. "I only wish *my* wish would come true, too. I wished we could" —

"Oh! don't, don't tell it, don't!" interrupted Ella: "it won't come true if you do, — never does! But, Flo, what shall we do with this child, now it's here? Do you s'pose it's a boy, or a girl?"

"Oh! I don't know. I guess it's a girl," said Florence, in a tone of doubt.

"But boys wear skirts, — little boys, you know," urged Etta, who was rather fond of boys; believing all were as good and great as was her brother Tom in her eyes. "I suppose he'll wake up some time. What'll we do if it cries?" continued she, feeling the responsibilities of life beginning to rest on her heart already.

"It won't do to have the little thing cry." said Flossy, decidedly; "and what'll she have to eat?"

"Oh, my! Floss, we haven't a thing in the house to eat! The last cookie was as hard as a rock, and I crunched that this morning. Let's go and get something from Hannah, so as to be ready when it wakes up!" And off they flew, besieging Hannah and her well-filled pantry; soon returning with a good supply of edibles in a butler's tray borne between them. Bread, butter, sandwiches, cold chicken and tongue, berries and milk; cake, cookies, biscuit, and muffins, — half enough to feed a small regiment! These they safely stored in the closets till time of need, while they ran again for numerous small articles left behind for want of room.

When they returned and went up to the chamber again, they found the new-comer sitting wide awake, flushed and rosy, playing with a few flowers, evidently gathered on his way hither. Delighted with this further evidence of the actual humanity of their treasure, the little girls approached gently, and began to ask a few questions.

"'Where did you come from, baby dear?'" — in the very words of George Macdonald.

The little one did *not* reply, "Out of the everywhere into here," — as he might have, judging from his travel-stained appearance; for he was covered with road-dust, the one shoe he wore was broken and unlaced, his face and hands dirty, his golden curls as tangled as sun-shadows in deep woods; but he seemed content, and babbled in pretty baby-talk, "Pitty fowers; Tin pull em; pitty fowers, me uv em," till the children laughed aloud at his serious countenance.

"Oh, what a dirty baby!" said Etta, as the unclean, unkempt condition of the child became more and more evident, as he tried to get off the bed. "What is your name, dear?" asked she.

"Tin Dick Fan Tum Tum," answered the youngster, understandingly.

"What?" exclaimed both children at once.

"Tin Dick Fan Tum Tum," repeated the stranger; and Flossy threw herself over on the bed, screaming with laughter, while Etta made him say it over and over again, till they all three fell to laughing together, and a great frolic wore away the strangeness of the situation.

"Well!" said Etta, at last, "I guess we shall never be able to speak his language, anyhow. What'll we call him, Flo? He must have a name."

"I guess he's Chinese," said Flo. "He's a boy, anyhow, I think; for a girl, *any* girl, would have a different name from that."

"I don't know what girls' names are in China," said Etta, laughing; "but one name's as good as another: let's call him 'China.' Come, China, are you hungry? I'm sure you're dirty. Oh! let's wash him first, Flo," exclaimed Etta, delightedly.

"Oh, yes! but, Et, we haven't got a tub big enough, have we?"

"There's the dish-tub down in the sink, or the big tin pan. Wait! I'll get it." And off ran Etta, and soon returned, bringing the little cedar dish-tub half-full of water. But, when the tub was brought, the child looked so much too large for it they saw at once *that* wouldn't do, and Flo offered to bring the big tin pan. This, on being brought, had the same fault as the other: the baby was still too big for the pan!

In despair, they looked about. The wash-bowl was not as large as the pan, so that wouldn't do. "The big basket," suggested Flossy. "Oh! it would all leak out," they both exclaimed; and that was *not* brought: when Flossy made a voyage of discovery, and after a while returned, saying, cheerfully, —

"All right, Etta; come help me bring in this trunk. This will do as well as a bath-tub!"

And so they emptied a trunk that served as a table, covered with a pretty cloth, as well as a receptacle for castaway toys and odds and ends, and dragged it into the chamber; where, after many journeys for water, it was filled at last, and the little "China" child stripped and plunged in its cold contents. The little creature shivered and shook, but enjoyed splashing about, and took the hard scrubbing the little matrons administered pretty amiably. The water trickled out on the carpet from the four corners, — even made little lakes and ponds, penetrating to the room below; but they were enjoying the novel fun too much to notice such small particulars. The trunk-lid came down on their devoted heads with resounding whacks; but the bath was successfully accomplished; the child clean, dry, and dressed in an old dress of Flo's, — used by them as a "worker;" then fed with any of the dainties he selected, and put to bed for the night.

In talking matters over, the little girls had concluded it would be best not to say any thing to anybody about their new plaything, till they should get a little used to the care of it, before people should have a chance to laugh at their awkwardness. "For, of course," said Flossy, sagely, "we can't be expected to know all about how to take care of a child, all at once. I heard mamma tell Aunt Mary that 'young Mrs. Holt seemed very awkward with her baby; but it would all come right to her after a while.'" And so little "China" was left in bed in the blue chamber; the door locked securely on their precious treasure; and the little girls went to their supper, which happened to be late that night, for the ladies had gone to the city, and did not return till after nightfall.

Etta and Flo slept soundly, — too soundly to dream; but soon after sunrise they awoke and sprang up, eager to meet the day that had in store so much pleasure for them.

Breakfast over, they hastened to the "Bird's Nest" to look after the little nestling there. Still asleep they found him, and all safe; for they had thought-

fully placed chairs, heaped with pillows and shawls, each side the bed, lest the baby should roll out, — Etta having still distinct recollections of a broken collar-bone from falling out of bed in the nurse's absence.

Every thing around seemed so damp, and the trunk, looking as if it would never be dry again, discouraged them when another bath was proposed; and, while Florence prepared some breakfast for him, Etta ran back to the house, to what was called the "Charity Bureau," for some clothing to replace his cast-off garments.

Her mother always repaired and laid aside outgrown and defaced articles of apparel, to be given to the poor; and here she knew were things suitable for the child; and, when the little fellow awoke, the girls dressed him, and curled his sunny locks; and a very pretty child smiled upon them as he regarded the new clothes with favor.

His appetite seemed not as good as the night before, and after a while he became rather fretful. The patience of the little care-takers was very considerably tried: but they were unwearied in their efforts to amuse him; and when, after a long forenoon, Etta proposed a play on the bed, and after a good frolic they had the pleasure of seeing him drop off into a sound sleep, the two went in to dinner, they looked so very tired that Mrs. Montford noticed it, and said: "I am really afraid, my dears, that you work too hard in your garden and house, this warm weather, you look so worn-out. Had you not better play that you had closed it for a while, and come and make us a visit upstairs, till you get rested?" To which they both replied, —

"Oh, no, mamma! No, indeed, auntie: we are not tired; we don't work too hard;" lest they should be forbidden to return, and then what would become of their child? So they slipped away unnoticed in the general after-dinner stir, ran to the "Nest," and laid themselves softly down beside the still sleeping child to rest; and the quiet of the darkened room soon launched them on the waveless sea of sleep.

To be continued.

For The Dayspring.

LITTLE SUNSHINE.

We call her "Little Sunshine,"
For she is full of fun,
And every place she brightens,
Just like a ray of sun.
When other lips are pouting,
Hers always wear a smile;
Then she is ever busy,
And happy all the while.

Our merry little Sunshine,
One morning, in the rain,
She stood to watch it patter
Adown the window-pane.
Said she, "You call me 'Sunshine:'
If this is really true,
I ought to make a rainbow
Upon the wall for you."

I smiled, for I remembered
How oft her sunny ways
Our quiet home had brightened
On dark and stormy days.
When suddenly she vanished,
Like a sunbeam, from my sight,
Yet came again as quickly,
And showed me, with delight,

A rainbow she had painted, —
Perhaps *you* might have smiled;
But on the wall I pinned it,
To please the happy child.
Said I, "When showers are over,
The rainbow fades away,
But yours, my little Sunshine,
Will last for many a day."

A PRUDENT man is like a pin; his head prevents him from going too far.

For The Dayspring.

SOME PRETTY PETS.

IT was the night before Christmas, when the old express-wagon rumbled into the door-yard, and a loud ring told the arrival of something which proved to be, to the great delight of my sister and myself, *alive!* A large package was placed on the kitchen-floor, and divested of its paper wrappings, — sundry scratchings, and such pleasant noises, meanwhile attesting the live and lively nature of the "critturs," as our old Peter called them, whatever they might be, which dwelt in the brown house that soon came to view.

Only the house could be seen as yet. It was quite large; about two-thirds of it strongly wired in front, with a door that fastened securely. Then another outside door opened into a closely boarded chamber; and between the two rooms was a partition, with a square opening, so that the occupants could pass from one to the other, as they liked.

I cannot tell you how pleased we were when we saw the little creatures. Two beautiful rabbits, — what we had wished for many a time! One was entirely white, with pink eyes; the other, white, except a ring of gray around each eye, gray ears, and a stripe on its back. Its eyes were a beautiful black, and like a child's. We named her Lily. They were both as clean as new-fallen snow, and as gentle and tame as kittens. Like kittens, too, they were fond of milk, as we soon learned. We knew nothing about taking care of them; but, the first thing, we tried giving them warm milk for supper, and oh, how eagerly they lapped it! and how demurely they washed their faces and paws afterwards, there again, just like a pussy! We gave them a nice, soft bed of hay; and the next day we found out a good many things that they liked.

It was easy to keep them, they ate so many kinds of food; and for the winter, they had bread and milk, boiled potatoes and rice, cabbage, turnips, carrots, apples, parsley, oats; and when spring came, the green grass and clover, the radishes and lettuce, furnished them daily feasts.

I must tell you where we kept them through the cold weather. One of the kitchen chambers had a good-sized closet right by the chimney; so it was never very cold. There we had the brown house, and used to leave its door, and that of the closet, open. The rabbits were full-grown, and therefore safe from the cat (or rather *cats*; for we always had them in numbers, varying from three to fifteen, and of nearly all colors, ages, and sizes, down to the fourth generation).

Good-natured old Peter, who had lived nearly all his life on the place, occupied the chamber; but he never objected to the tenants of the closet, though they sometimes broke his slumbers by coming out of their house and racketing around his room, at most unseasonable hours. Kind old Peter, with his curly, grizzly-gray hair and beard, and his round eyes, black and shining as those of a squirrel! Like a good genie he was to our childhood. Dearly he loved children; and nothing they did seemed to him wrong, nothing they wanted seemed unreasonable.

One morning, when I went upstairs, as usual, to carry the bunnies' breakfast, what do you think I found? Four bright-eyed, tiny rabbits, *running about*, in and out of the little chamber, and following their mother! They must have been three weeks old; but as the large rabbits were so tame that they always came to meet

us when we went to feed or pet them, we had not looked into their bedroom, though we had swept their outer room nearly every day. There the baby-bunnies had been, curled in their nest, without our ever suspecting it.

One was pure white, with pink eyes; another was gray, like a wild rabbit; one white, marked with gray, like the mother; and one just the same, except that the ears, the stripe, and the rings around her eyes were jet-black. All these three had black eyes. They were little beauties, the four; and such gentle, fearless pets!

When we looked into the nest, we found it lined with soft, white fur. Later, when Lily made another nest, we found out where she obtained it. *She pulled it from her own breast*, as the eider-duck takes the down from hers! We did not want our little pet Lily to hurt herself, and we tried to make her nest for her as soft and warm as we could; but do it she would. This was after we had moved them out-doors, and had a little yard made for them, behind and partly under the barn, where they were sheltered from wind and storm.

When the first little family were grown, so that they were too large for the cats to meddle with, we let them out on the green hill behind the house, to run at will in the sunshine, and help themselves to clover. How happy they were! They were too tame and contented to go away. One of the young bunnies we missed, and thought it might have strayed to the woods, close by; but the rest would come when we called them, and feed from our hands.

One afternoon, I was going out visiting; and, after I was dressed, I went to give the bunnies some cabbage-leaves, and see that they had food enough to last. While I was watching them eat, two holding a leaf between them and nibbling, I felt something at the toe of my gaiter-boot. Patent-leather tips were new things then, and very precious. There was one of the rabbits, nibbling my patent-leather tip! Well, I am glad to say that, sorry though I was, I did not scold the little thing, or feel angry with him, for I knew he did not know any better. I only took care of my tips afterward.

When we had a shower, in warm days, instead of seeking shelter, Lily and her mate would run into a field near the house, and sit in the rain, side by side, seeming heartily to enjoy their bath.

We gave many of the little rabbits to those who would treat them kindly, but kept Lily and her mate, and they lived with us many years. M. O. J.

MANY years ago a minister put up for the night with a man who was supposed to possess but little of what people call "common sense." Just as he was about to retire for rest, the man said: "Tell me, sir, what three words in the English language are the most difficult to pronounce?"

"I don't know that I can," was the reply.

"Well," said the man, "I'll give you till to-morrow morning to answer me."

The minister thought no more of the question till it was proposed to him again in the morning, when he carelessly said he had not thought of it. "Then," said the man, "I will tell you. They are, — 'I am wrong.'"

SOME one has beautifully said that "sincerity is speaking as we think, believing as we pretend, acting as we profess, performing as we promise, and being as we appear."

A WISE man reflects before he speaks; a fool speaks, and then reflects on what he has uttered.

BOUND VOLUMES OF "THE DAYSPRING," for each of the seven years which it has been published, can be had at this office. The volume for 1878 contains "Billy Duncan's Christmas Tree" by Rev. N. Seaver, Jr., "Grace's Trials" by Miss Lucretia P. Hale, and "Little Figures" by Miss Mary C. Bartlett. Any one of these stories if published in a separate volume would cost more than we charge for all of them, with much other reading-matter and twenty-eight illustrations in this pretty volume, the price of which is but fifty cents to subscribers and seventy-five cents to those who are not subscribers.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS for January contains Lessons XIX.–XXII. of the Seventh Series. The titles of these four Lessons are: "Manasseh and Josiah," "The Last Kings of Judah," "The Captivity of Judah," and "The Prophet Jeremiah." A tabular view of the Hebrew Kings and Prophets is also given. The present series will end with the June number, and a new series, devoted to "The Life and Teachings of Jesus," begin with the September number.

"THE WIDE-AWAKE" begins the new year with an amusing and instructive number. It is one of the best of our juvenile magazines, and worthy of a place in every home where there are children. It is published by D. Lothrop & Co., Boston, at two dollars a year.

THOSE having copies of "The Dayspring" for February, 1878, which they can spare, will confer a favor by sending them to the office of publication, 7 Tremont Place, Boston.

Puzzles.

EASY ENIGMA.

I am composed of twelve letters.
My 4, 7, 2, 12, is a fruit.
My 9, 11, 12, 6, is used in knitting.
My 3, 10, 8, is a seat in church.
My 1, 2. 5, is eaten by cattle.
My whole is what we wish all of you.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. Is used to produce insensibility.
2. Was the muse who presided over astronomy.
3. Is a railroad carriage.
4. Is a beam of light.
5. Is to be very odd.
6. Is a vessel used to hold water.
7. Is a tropical country.
8. Is the element we breathe.
9. Is a writer of verses.
10. Is an eminence.
11. Is a mischievous animal.
12. Is the space under a roof.
13. Is a small insect.

My initials and finals form the names of two prominent contributors to "The Dayspring."

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN DECEMBER NUMBER.

EASY ENIGMA.

"Peace on earth, good-will to men."

PUZZLE.

Clover, Lover, Love, Lo.

BEHEADED RHYMES.

Prelate.
–relate.
—elate.
——late.
———ate.

THE DAYSPRING.

(Rev. George F. Piper, Editor),

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